

teach a catheter which has three defibrillation electrodes thereon, as well as pacing/sensing electrodes. The Examiner also states that Griffin teaches the use of electrode arrays in an atrial defibrillation catheter. The Examiner then states that such arrays have been shown in the prior art to be effective for defibrillation and can allow for customization of the defibrillation waveform pulse in ways that a solid defibrillation electrode cannot. The Examiner goes on to state that spacing of the arrays on a catheter is a function of the size of the patient's heart, and therefore, one of ordinary skill in the art would realize that a variety of spacings is encompassed by the disclosure of the above cited patents. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Applicants' invention includes a catheter for facilitating intracardiac atrial defibrillation. The catheter includes a unitary flexible member with three spaced apart electrode arrays secured around the periphery of the flexible member so that the first electrode array is positioned within the superior vena cava, the second electrode array is positioned within the right atrium, and the third electrode array is positioned within either the coronary sinus or the right ventricle. Applicants have amended the claims in order to more clearly recite their invention. Specifically, Applicants have canceled Claims 1-8 and 10 and have amended Claims 9 and 11 to more particularly define the step of positioning the electrode arrays within the areas stated above.

Neither of the references relied upon by the Examiner disclose or render obvious Applicants' method. Rather, Schulte et al. disclose an intravascular defibrillating catheter with distal and proximal spring electrodes. The catheter includes a cardioversion circuit which includes the electrodes, a conductor which conducts electrical pulses between the electrodes and proximal end of the catheter, and a cardioversion connector means which couples the conductor

with a pulse generator. The device also includes a cardiac sensing circuit. Griffin, III discloses an atrial defibrillation catheter which includes a flexible member and a balloon secured to the periphery of the flexible member. A plurality of spaced apart electrode bands are secured around the periphery of the flexible member. A plurality of electrical leads extend through the proximal end of the flexible member and through lumens in order to supply electrical current to the electrode bands.

Neither Schulte et al. nor Griffin, III disclose or render obvious Applicant's method for facilitating intracardiac atrial defibrillation in a patient where the first, second, and third electrode arrays of an elongated flexible member are positioned within the superior vena cava, the right atrium, and the coronary sinus, respectively. Neither do these reference disclose positioning the third electrode array in the right ventricle. Assuming that the Examiner has properly combined the references, Applicants' invention would not result. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in either of these references to position the electrode arrays within the specific areas of the heart as recited by Applicants. Therefore, Applicants' recited invention would not be rendered obvious by Schulte et al and Griffin, III.

The Examiner rejects Claims 1-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ideker et al. '553 in view of Griffin '965. The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to use electrode array type electrodes, as shown by Griffin, in place of the defibrillation electrodes of Ideker for reasons mentioned above. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Ideker et al. do not disclose or render obvious Applicants' invention as it is presently being claimed. Specifically, Ideker et al. do not disclose a unitary flexible member with

three spaced apart electrode arrays that are secured around the periphery of the flexible member so that the first electrode array is positioned within the superior vena cava, the second electrode array is positioned within the right atrium, and the third electrode array is positioned within either the coronary sinus or the right ventricle. Rather, Ideker et al. disclose a catheter system for atrial and ventricular defibrillation which includes a first catheter positioned in the right ventricle and a second catheter positioned in the coronary sinus. Each of the catheters carries defibrillation electrodes, a power supply, and a control circuit. The control circuit delivers an atrial defibrillation pulse through at least two of the electrodes, or a ventricular defibrillation pulse through at least two of the electrodes. Griffin, III adds little if anything to the teaching of Ideker et al. That is, Griffin, III does not disclose or suggest Applicants' invention, as discussed above. Therefore, even if Ideker et al. has been properly combined with Griffin, III, Applicants' invention would not result.

In view of all of the foregoing, Applicants submit that all of the claims presently in the application clearly and patentably distinguish over the references of record and should be allowed. It is believed that this application is on condition for allowance and an early action toward that end is most respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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